

/140 cont./

301 Earrings of Molentza chain; necklaces of glass beads. Rings on arms, wrists, and legs as among the men.

[756] The "Bushman doctor" wears special ornaments that other people are not permitted to wear. Unfortunately, I was not able to obtain any of these ornaments.

[882] Girls, it is said, do not start wearing ornaments until after their first menses.

● [196] All the ornaments are worn for dances and ceremonies. The headdress of the women in Photograph 20 is worn only on special festive occasions.

302 The "doctor" has his head shaved smooth. I did not notice [756] a special hairdress. The men frequently stick individual loose ostrich feathers in the hair, while the women like to braid brass [301] or iron beads into the hair. In addition, the women use a kind of pomade made of various pulverized plant parts which are combined with fat from antelope skin.

Men sometimes cut their head-hair with a knife or a piece of glass.

There is no differentiation in hair style between girls and married women.

[386] The hair is frequently dyed with a mixture of fat and red clay. I am uncertain, however, whether or not this is a means of making the hair fall out in places. On the other hand, in that case there would probably have to be another ingredient /141/ in this mixture that I was unable to discover.

In case a beard is present, which does not occur often, it is neither cut nor removed in any other way.

[142] Pubic hair is sparse and is sometimes shaved off (with a piece of glass). It is said that women have no pubic hair at all.

E. Artificial Deformities

A kind of cosmetic of a reddish-brown color is used by the women.

It consists of a mixture of fat and red clay (see Section D above) and is manufactured by the women themselves.

[535] This cosmetic is regarded solely as a means of beautification and is used especially at festivals (dances).

[47 cont.]

756 pig concerned, at which time in each case a large drop of white
 751 fluid escaped from the stinger. Finally they moved about quietly without making any further attempts to sting, but they did not in any way show the excited hurry to get off the Bushman's body that has been reported by individual writers. The old man claimed not to feel any pain, and I have no reason to distrust him since, after all, if the poison had had any kind of effect upon him, he would scarcely have allowed himself to be stung in the most sensitive parts of his body for the sake of my desire for knowledge. Even a full hour after our experiment, the parts that had been stung did not show the slightest alteration. The man declared that he had attained this extraordinary faculty as a boy in the 'school' of a sorcerer, where he had been urged to apply scorpion poison, which had been taken forcibly and thinned with water and urine, on small incisions, as well as to eat the poisonous stingers pounded to a mash and boiled; supposedly immunity against snakebite can be obtained in like manner."

14. The Doctors' Test

755 One afternoon the eldest of the horde outside Keibeb came
 756 to me and told me that that night a great dance would take place,
 796 first, because a three-year-old child had just been bitten by a small black snake, second, because many people were sick with fever, and third, because one of the men wanted to undergo the doctors' test. Such festivals take place only during the time of the full moon. Toward nine o'clock in the evening I was lured into the camp by wild noise. The people had made somewhat larger and more fires than usual. The mother with the child bitten by the snake was seated in the center of an open semicircle. The older women squatted around her. To one side of them in single file, one behind each other, stood the younger women and girls. Both the male [48] and female doctors were busy. The chief female doctor, Biri, was "personally" absent this evening. She was crouching off to one side in the darkness of the bush. /Nawa, [787] the highest of the //Gauab, had taken possession of her and spoke through her mouth. Her hair ornaments, long chains of beads made

[48 cont.]

- 755 from ostrich egg shells, had been put on by her proxy, Dube, a
756 very intelligent young woman. The latter, standing at the end of
● 796 the semicircle of seated women, conducted the ceremony. She
[276] was in a very good mood and alternately smoked her Bushman
[554] pipe and my cigarettes. There is a kind of hierarchy among the
women; those who were squatting were higher in rank than those
who were standing. All the women clapped their hands and sang
[533] in a monotonous rhythm: ehe, ehe, ehe, ehe, etc. This, I was
assured, was no song, but "music." Some hordes have bartered



Fig. 19. Sorcerer in a Bird Mask, Followed by Spirits of Sick-
ness. (From Rock Paintings in South Africa. From Parts of the
Eastern Province and Orange Free State. Copied by G.W. Stow.
With an introduction and descriptive notes by Dorothea Bleek.
London, Methuen, 1930.)

- dance drums one and a half meters high from the Okavango,
which on this occasion are played by men. [Fig. 19 appears
[184] here.] Among the Bushmen of the Sand Veld the female leader
of the ceremony does not wear the ornaments of the chief female
doctor; instead, the ornaments are hung on a tree. The position
of the chief female doctor is not permanently held by one person;
the chief doctor on occasion imparts supernatural powers to her.

755 The five doctors had taken off all their ornaments and
756 were naked except for the front apron. They put themselves
786 into an autohypnotic state by means of crowing, by producing
796

[48 cont.]

755 sounds similar to those of ventriloquists, and by certain muscle
756 contractions. By pressing together the gluteal musculature of the
786 buttocks and at the same time holding the knee joints as far apart
●796 as possible and pressing the legs together at the ankles, they
eventually produced a tonic trembling cramp of the entire muscula-
ture of the lower extremity, in which they reeled back and forth.
It is possible for anyone to put himself into an autohypnotic state
in this way, as this author also learned from the doctors. Soon
the rolled-up eyes indicated that the doctors were in a state of trance.
They danced around one another, fell over one another, and
lifted one another up. Some women also started making noise
with the dance rattles. The Bushmen were now convinced that
[787] /Nawa himself was dancing among the doctors, was visible to
them, and spoke with them. At this point they say something
[782] like prayers; they invoke the great spirit of the old Bushman who
has killed many elephants; they call the spirits of the dead who
have sent their little spirits of sickness over the living, and they
especially beg /Nawa to transfer these little spirits of sickness to
the doctors.

755 The doctors ran alternately to the bitten child and to
756 those ill with fever who squatted around the fire, stroking the
796 painful places, both from the armpits down to the soles and from
the shoulders down to the fingertips. Occasionally they also sucked
at the diseased spots or inhaled the breath from the mouths of the
patients.

From time to time, the doctors performed these operations
upon one another, first of all, as they said, in order to distribute
the poisons of sickness equally among all the doctors, but also in
order to obtain power from the other doctors. Thus "charged,"
the doctor then again ran to the patients to take their poison.

Now and then the chief doctor ran screaming around the
[787] line of standing women and [49] disappeared into the bush in order
to ask the chief female doctor about the will of /Nawa. After
about an hour's dancing the chief doctor went to the bitten child.
The child had been bitten on the back, and this was rubbed with
fat and then medicine; then all the patients were again subjected
to the treatment described above, and soon thereafter /Nawa an-
[787] nounced through the mouth of the chief female doctor that the

[49 cont.]

[787]
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child, and the other patients, too, would be cured. That ended the first part of the ceremony.

[753]
[761]

Now the doctors' test began. The others, with the exception of the women making music, participated only as spectators. The doctors went on dancing, often holding their arms stretched out to the sky, with the fingers spread apart, and then springing to the fire and holding their hands over it. Flinging the hands toward the sky is done to give some of the little spirits of sickness back to the chief spirit /Nawa, who passes up and down along a thread between heaven and earth. It is not a gesture of prayer. Similarly, holding the hands over the fire is intended to achieve the same result, because the "little spirits of sickness" do not like the fire and hence will go away. Meanwhile, they thank the great spirit for having saved the child. Then they prayed to /Nawa that he might concentrate all the little spirits of sickness on the doctors' candidate and kill him so that the people would be free of evil diseases, for the dying person takes the spirits of sickness with him. By brushing, rubbing, and blowing, the old doctors now transfer the spirits of sickness to the candidate. The latter is completely exhausted, collapses from time to time, is constantly lifted up again, and, staggering, he dances on, with foam appearing at his mouth. The other doctors taunt him: "You leopard, you lion, you elephant, you insurmountable mountain, you gigantically strong man, now you can't cope with the spirits of sickness we have given you." Once more the chief doctor runs to the former patient and transfers to the candidate any disease poison he may have gathered. This hellish spectacle lasted one and a half hours; then the chief doctor went to his oracle sitting in the bush and asserted that the candidate was too strong: we have concentrated all the little spirits of sickness upon him and prayed to the chief spirit that he might take (kill) him, but the candidate is stronger than the spirits of sickness. Nevertheless, the oracle commands: "Dance on." While this happened, a woman came out of the background -- in the half-dark I was unable to see whether or not it was the chief female doctor herself -- and busied herself around the cured child. She clapped her hands and beat her palms together, with the thumb sides in front of the child's face, and thus put even the child in a brief trance. The dancing continued until around midnight when the oracle finally declared that though the

[49 cont.]

755 chief spirit was not yet satisfied, she would appease him; the chief
756 spirit would voluntarily take the little spirits of sickness away, even
796 from the doctors. After these words the festival abruptly ended;
the people went to their fires and lay down to sleep.

The candidate had passed his examination (1).

[184]

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1. Burchell (in the translation by Hellwald, Völkerkunde [Ethnology], II, p. 519) has given a similar account from the south: "One foot remains stationary, while the other is in rapid and irregular motion without any definite change of position. The movement of the arms is so slight as to be negligible. At the same time the dancer sings without pause and keeps time with the movements. Occasionally he lowers his body and then suddenly raises it again, until finally he sinks to the ground exhausted, but still singing and rhythmically moving his body in time with the song of the spectators. Even though only one person dances at a time, the company present nonetheless also has something to do, etc."

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When the excitement of the dance has reached its climax and the dancers have fallen into a kind of trance as a result of the continuous dance movement, the shrill singing, the drinking of coffee, and not least the tobacco smoke, which they keep in their mouths for minutes on end for the intoxicating effect, then the doctors, in order to demonstrate their resistance to fire, trample with bare feet on the red-hot embers taken from the campfire and spread out on the sand. In the case of a number of the younger ones, however, I believe that their resistance to fire was not quite as great as they would have one believe, and they carefully avoided the pieces that were

[49 cont.]

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glowing all too brightly. On the other hand, I was surprised when on the occasion of such a religious dance the so-called great doctor -- after he had danced by himself long and continuously in visible ecstasy, so that in spite of the cool night and even though he was almost completely naked, the sweat ran down his entire body -- suddenly, with slow majestic steps, walked through the high flames of the fire and in so doing had to step on the burning logs with his bare feet.

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[50] On a later occasion I discussed these procedures thoroughly and in detail with the chief doctor, Kasi, and with Dube and the other doctors. One of the most striking aspects of the entire ceremony is perhaps the absence of the mysterious and the magical. These little spirits of sickness are not magical creatures but, in the eyes of the Bushmen, commonplace realities. The Bushmen know very well that many illnesses are not caused by the spirits of sickness alone. If someone eats something that has gone bad, he will become ill and will be given an emetic. If someone is wounded by a shot, the wound will be treated. If the injured person has pains only in the wound and otherwise feels all right, then no spirit of sickness has entered into him. If he feels sick all over, however, then he is possessed by a spirit of sickness. These little spirits of sickness are called dsao; they are little yellow men with a fat belly and a little tail. They obey the other spirits, which, as described above, include the ordinary spirits from the bodies of deceased persons, the spirits who live among the stars, and the chief spirit (/Nawa) himself. [Fig. 20 appears here.]

Finally, even the "great captain" can send the dsao directly over a person. /Nawa can do this with or without the consent of the "great captain"; the smaller spirits act on their own authority or at the command of these powers.

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The doctors have their supernatural power directly from the "great captain"; they are as powerful as /Nawa and stronger

!KUNG

[50 cont.]

756 than the smaller spirits. Their treatment is correspondingly suc-
776 cessful or unsuccessful. In other words, the doctors are vindicated
in any case.

755 The treatment of illness thus follows two parallel paths:
757 one with natural means (medicines and the like), directed at the
local symptoms of the ailment; and one with supernatural means,
directed at the dsao that cause the feeling of sickness.

During the doctors' test the following song is sung:



Fig. 20. Bushman Revolver of the !Kung (Foxhof; actual size
[as shown in original text]).

e hehehe na ti //kau /goa dsao

During the treatment itself the following text is sung:

/o ma ga //goa ~~f~~am /nai tha

He has no medicine yet, he must be
thrown with the medicine.

Von Zastrow and Vedder (1) have the following to report

1. Die Buschmänner, p. 424.

[53 cont.]

- 751 burned to a tinder and pulverized to make a medicine. The per-
 821 son struck now has incisions made on his tongue, forehead, cheeks,
 chest, and legs, into which fat is rubbed, and then this medicine
 is smeared on. Now, for the time being, he is safe from persecu-
 tion by the rain.

16. Rain Magic

- 789 People turn directly to the great captain when they need
 796 rain. Not all doctors are able to procure rain, only the few who
 enjoy the special favor of the great captain. Then a dance is or-
 ganized, at which the doctors put themselves in the trance state
 described below. At the same time the following lament is re-
 peated countless times:

[54]

[539] !gará gurí dee oa #am
 X'ua dẽ rá /gaa !ái /gaa

/gám khui hẽ
 !kũng-ná gurí /gõá /gõá
 //gauána tani /gee #gáo
 !kung /goá hõõ !koa

!kung õ dshn-ã
 //gaa /a //gõẽ !kung
 /n a //gõẽ

!kunã //gõẽ ne oa
 Ha-!kung tam hã m tam ná
 /n gẽẽ

Why does it not rain?
 Which lord is holding back the
 rain?
 The sun is hot.
 Will man live?
 Are the spirits bringing winter?
 Where is man supposed to drink?

If it is so, can man only die
 of thirst?
 What can man do now?
 We had better stay here because
 we have been abandoned!

- 756 Finally the great captain in heaven hears the lamenting.
 789 The doctor runs from the dance place into the bush and sees that
 787 a thin thread is let down from the sky. The doctor climbs up on
 796 this thread. The great captain comes to meet him half way.

As soon as the doctor sees the great captain, he throws a red
 powder (ocher with medicine) toward him. Now the great captain
 draws the doctor up and leads him to the heavenly house. In front
 of this house [Fig. 20 appears here] the doctor sees the spirits of
 [725] his deceased colleagues who year in, year out, stand before the
 house.

!KUNG

[54 cont.]

756 house. The doctor then begins to pray: "Lord, help us, the chil-
789 dren are dying, we are dying of thirst and hunger." He prays and
787 begs until the captain says: "It is good, I shall send water so that
796 the children will have water and veldkost." Then the great captain
again accompanies the doctor halfway down. As soon as the doctor
is down below, he lets go of the thread which is immediately drawn
up. Now the people dance and sing, for the rain has come:

(531) /gá-é dsó-jā /gaa We rejoice now over the rain.
//ē gā djušā !kho ādshója /ga Then we rejoice all together.
//ē gā hin a /gaa /gaa Then the rain comes.
da //goá dshn !gu da adschóéa Then the people praise the
X u lord.



Fig. 21. Spirits of the Dead and Rain Animal (from Bleek, Rock Paintings in South Africa etc., Pl. 58).

776 Another !Kung said to me: "The great captain in the sky
821 sends the rain and all that comes from above. If he does not want to,
everything remains shut up. The rain is opened up above; a great
vlei is there. I do not know the name of the great captain. The
Hei//om call him Som-seb."

17. Religion

771 After a critical look at the sum of the conceptions determining
177 the religious life of the !Kung, one recognizes, as would naturally
be expected in the case of such an ancient people, that the elements

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#AUIN
NOSAU

[70 cont.]

881 her food, which is given to her by an old woman. On the sixth day the girl goes looking for veldkost with an old woman, and, when she has returned, she herself makes the fire and cooks the food in the circle of her guests, for the first time officially independent.

(592) Girls may marry even before this ceremony.

881 [71] Among the #Auin the initiation is held for each girl at the time of the first menstruation. The same is true among the Naron. The eland bull dance is performed every night during the girl's period. Two old men attach real or wooden eland 535 horns to their heads and wait in the bush. Then the menstruating girl comes and sits down or lies down surrounded by old women, in the center of a circle of younger women who stage a dance. The two eland bulls soon appear and then quickly disappear again. The dance is very indecent. Among the Nussan, men masked as birds (!) take the place of the eland bulls.

796 Once a year, in autumn when the veldkost is harvested, there is a great festival. The day is called: "//gam gna she (the great day)." On this occasion food is prepared, and the Bushmen come from all sides. They dance and sing, but they are supposed to stay at home; no one may hunt, look for veldkost, or do any kind of work. [Fig. 25 appears here.]

4. Courtship, Wedding, and Marriage

584 If a young Bushman wants to marry, he does not go to the girl, but instead must speak with her parents; at the same time the girl's consent to the marriage is necessary. Once this consent is given, presents are exchanged between the parents of the engaged couple, or a gemsbok is shot and divided between the two families. Immediately after the presents have been exchanged, preparations for the wedding are begun. If enough game, above all, a gemsbok, is at hand, they dance through the entire night and sing: "Ueeö, ueeeö, ö, eee, gueeö, guueeö," [599] etc.

581 Then the young man takes his wife and moves to the horde [591] of his father. Great importance is attached to virginity before marriage. "It simply does not happen among us that a girl

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N/OW

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similar to the /Kung word *n/ow* in sound but refers to a different belief. In the /Kung belief, *n/ow* influences rain. The Hottentot concept of */naw* supposes a state of being which exists when people are in periods of crisis in their lives. Professor Schapera¹ says of the state of */naw*, summarizing Mrs. Hoernlé's analysis:

All periods of crisis in the life of a Hottentot involve his separation from his usual surroundings, his preparation for a new group in society, and, finally, his reception into this group. A person in such a crisis is exposed to danger on every side; he must retire from contact with other people, and take special care of himself. But he is also a danger to other people, and more especially to the animals and other living things upon which the community depends for its livelihood. Hence he is secluded, and must abstain scrupulously from his usual tasks.

Such a person is said to be */naw*. It is essential that he be initiated, as it were, with the least possible delay into that group of his people already possessing the new characteristic he has acquired, in order that he may have a normal place in the community once more.

Remarried persons or persons newly widowed are examples.

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Mrs. Hoernlé records a rain ceremony of the Hottentots which has several elements in common with the /Kung belief about *n/ow*. The Hottentot ceremony is called the *guri≠ab* (yearly killing).² Professor Schapera's³ description of the *guri≠ab*, which follows, is, as he says, based mainly on Mrs. Hoernlé's account.

... It [the ceremony] is held, if possible, on the banks of a stream, and if there is no stream near by, then a trench is dug to simulate one. When the old men judge that the summer rains are due (about November or December), they tell the chief that it is time to hold the yearly feast, and he sends word to all the outlying families, and decides the time and spot for the ceremony.

Each family contributes according to its means, all bringing milk, and those who can, some female animal, a cow or a ewe, which must be pregnant. The feast cannot be held at all without one pregnant animal. . . . fires are lit to cook the meat for the feast. In addition a fire is lit on the banks of the stream for the special part of the ceremony. The animals are killed and cut up very carefully, so as to preserve intact the uteri, which are kept till after the feast. Eating apparently goes on most of the time until all the food is finished.

When the fire at the riverside is ready, and a channel has been made to the river or stream, the old men of the tribe who are good at prophesying take the uteri, hold them over the fire and pierce them with sticks so that the uterine fluid flows directly through the fire and down the river. At the same time milk in plenty and fat from the animals are thrown on the fire, so that liquid really flows, and great clouds of smoke rise into the sky. Meanwhile all the people round gather together in a great tribal dance, calling on *Tsi //Goab* to send the rain in plenty, to make the ground soft and the grass green, so that they may have plenty of food for the year.

The uterine fluid, the fire and clouds of smoke rising into the sky, and the association of the ceremony with rain are the elements in the Hottentot belief which are similar to the elements in the /Kung Bushman belief of *n/ow*. But, though there are these interesting common elements, the /Kung concept differs largely from the Hottentot *guri≠ab*.

¹ Schapera, I., *The Khoisan Peoples of South Africa*, New York, 1951, pp. 256-7.

² Hoernlé, Agnes W., 'A Hottentot Rain Cere-

mony', *Bantu Studies*, I, No. 2 (May 1922), pp. 9-4.

³ Schapera, op. cit., p. 379.

238

N/OW

623 about it to others, unless it were a hunter caught in a storm alone in the veld; but
 821 an individual, even without necessarily expressing a consensus, we think might say
 789 to another, 'Why don't you burn some of your hair?', which would probably be
 enough to instigate the act. And, in all likelihood, it would be done with so little
 formality that the observer would not know anything was happening unless he knew
 what to watch for and were alerted.

[171] There was no ceremony regularly performed by the /Kung of Nyae Nyae to ensure
 621 plentiful rain, like the Hottentots' *guri* ~~ab~~. The Rain dance of the /Kung, which is
 789 danced often, all through the year, is a medicine dance, among several others, such
 535 as the Giraffe, Sun, Gemsbok, Honey, and Mamba dances. All these are 'strong'
 796 things, the /Kung believe. The dances so named have 'strong' medicine music. They
 755 are danced during the medicine men's ceremony to cure the sick and protect the
 people and drive away any of the *//gana*, the spirits of the dead, who might be lurking
 to bring some evil upon the people. The Rain dance has this as its purpose, not the
 control of weather.

One night when the Rain dance was being beautifully danced with a fine precision
 and vigour of clapping, singing, and stamping, which to us suggested fervour, we
 were watching it so intently that we had not noticed the sky. The first storm of the
 season had crept up behind us and suddenly burst over us like a bomb. We asked
 [82] Gao if he believed the dance had brought the rain. He said that the rain was due to
 come. The dance had not brought it.

821 A *n/ow* animal, as well as a human, has either a good or a bad *n/ow*, but it seems
 825 not to be known clearly how it gets the one or the other. Good or bad *n/ow* is not
 correlated with one sex or one species. One giraffe, for example, either male or
 female, may have the rain-bringing, another the cold-bringing kind.

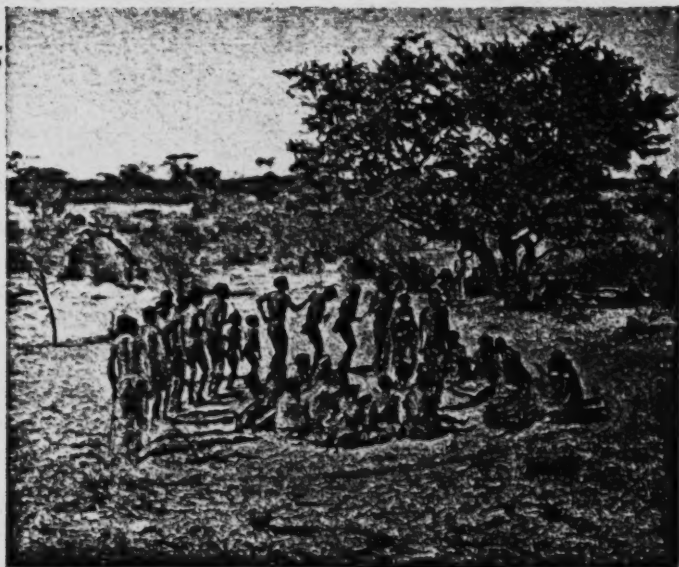
It seems that long or short horns may have something to do with good or bad *n/ow*,
 not the long-hornedness of gemsbok as compared with the short-hornedness of
 giraffes, but, within the species, the comparative length of horn. But one kind of
n/ow is not inherent in short-hornedness nor is the other kind in long-hornedness. It
 is not so simple as that. And informants did not know what association, if any, the
 short or long horns may have with ~~gani~~ Toma's vague idea that the short or long legs
 of a child in the womb might have something to do with the child's *n/ow*.

When a hunter kills a *n/ow* animal, he either ~~gani~~(s) or *//ghui*(s) it. Like the mother
 who ~~gani~~(s) or *//ghui*(s) her child at birth, the hunter has no voluntary control over
 this and cannot tell which he has done unless the effect is observed in the weather.
 A hunter with good or bad *n/ow* may ~~gani~~ or *//ghui* an animal which has either good
 or bad *n/ow* and long or short horns. The precise nature of the interaction remains
 obscure, but hunters took an interest in telling about the kind of *n/ow* they thought
 they had, and gave instances of observing the effects of their killing various types of
 animals. If a man should kill a female kudu with short horns and the water should
 freeze that night, it would be evident that he had *//ghui*(ed) the animal. He would
 expect to continue to *//ghui* short-horned female kudus. However, although a man's
n/ow remains constant throughout his life, the way it interacts with other factors may
 change, and after a time he may find he has begun to ~~gani~~ short-horned female
 kudus. We think the /Kung became a little tired of our finding this complicated.

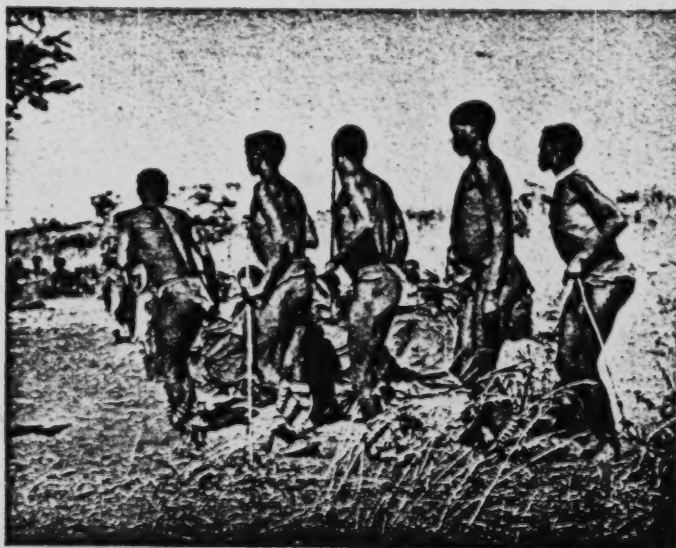
One day in September the sun blazed in the clear sky. The heat beat down upon us.

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

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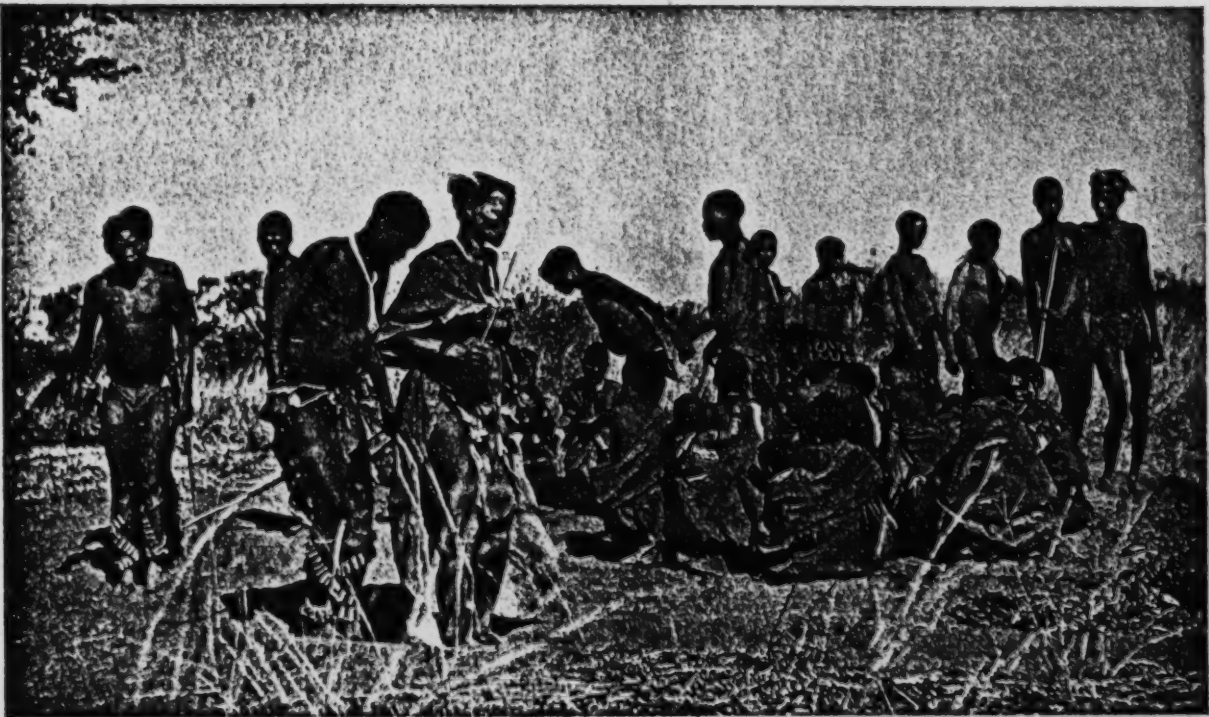


6. The curing dance; the men cut through the circle of singing, clapping women. The time for dancing is the night, but occasionally the /Kung dance in the daytime when there is a reason, such as obliging us when we asked for a daytime dance to photograph or as a preliminary to a *chama* ceremony



7. The dance rattles, strings of cocoons, add a swish, swish to the thud of the small, strong, stamping steps

[p. 228 (D)]



8. Occasionally a woman dances with the men for a brief time. All the men who are dancing except two (fourth and sixth from right) are practising medicine men. The one at the farthest left and the one bending forward are beginning to go into trance. Others hold them. In this stage they cure the people, leaning over one and then another, laying on their hands, and making their 'medicine' gestures and sounds

[P. 228 (E)]

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13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

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9. The next stage of trance

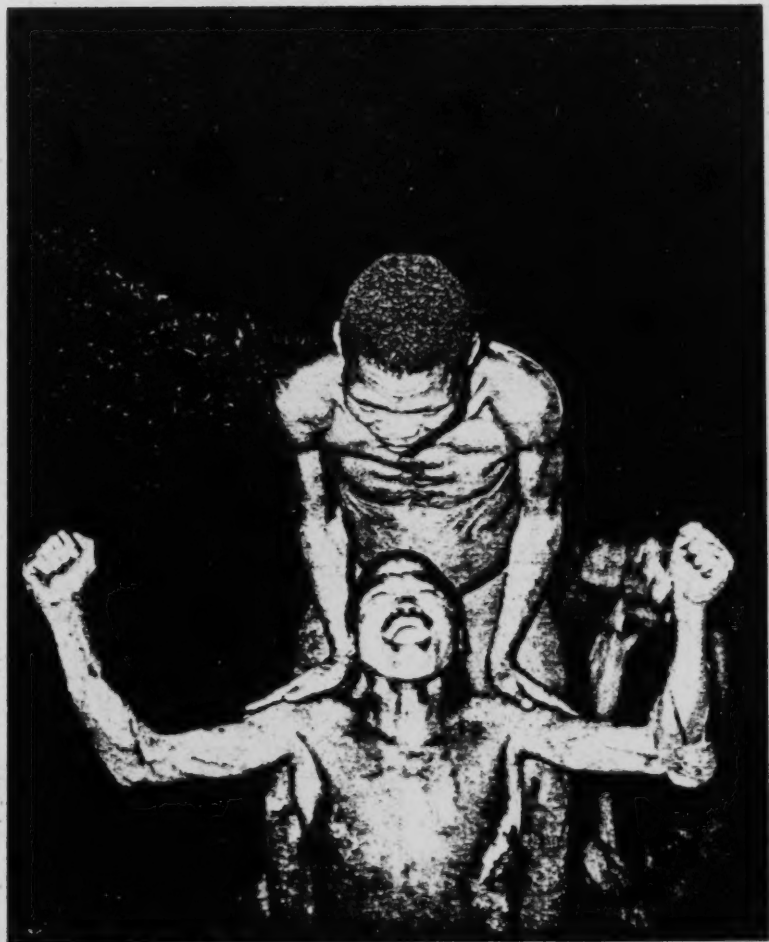


10. Two medicine men in deep trance; the people rest

[p. 228(F)]

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung

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11. The scream

[p.228 (G)]

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
Kung



12. Five medicine men at sunrise after they had danced and cured all night long. The women must still clap and sing the protective medicine music. The men in semi-trance care for those in deep trance, or 'half-death', as they call it



13. The tradition is continued. Playing 'dance', a little girl claps and sings while two boys dance around her

[p. 228 (H)]

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THE CEREMONIAL CURING DANCE

The ceremonial curing dance is the one religious act which has form and in which the people are united. The purpose of the dance is to cure sickness and to drive away evil. If there is actual sickness among the people or if real misfortune has come upon them, the dance will be held especially to cure these ills. But the people dance often when no one is actually known to be sick, and when no particular misfortune has come, to drive away evil which might be there but which one cannot see, and to feel protected by goodness.

The protecting goodness is the 'medicine', the magic power called *gaaxa*, which the /Kung believe the great god puts into the bodies of the medicine men and into the medicine songs. The /Kung believe that the great god endowed the power with its own autonomous potency, but nevertheless account for its failing to cure sometimes by saying that the all-powerful god allows it to work or not, according to his pleasure or displeasure. *Gaaxa* is the power evoked and activated during the curing dance.

[517] I believe the ceremonial curing dance to be a religious act, but, although very
[533] serious, especially in its final curing aspect, it is not piously solemn or constrained and it provides occasion for pleasure and aesthetic satisfaction. The music can be sung at any time, for lullabies or just for singing. Music and dancing are the arts of the /Kung. The good young dancers, especially, feel the delight which is inherent in fine integration of movement and rhythm (one can see this clearly), and the people watch and admire good dancing and take pleasure in it, and in the music.

[852] Furthermore, the dances are a socially unifying factor. All the people of the werf come together and participate, men and women, old and young. The men often dance with their babies on their shoulders in the early part of the dance, and the children dance and play among them, until they fall fast asleep in their mothers' laps.

[883] Anyone who wants a dance may start it by going around to people and asking them to come and begin. Someone who was sick would ask for a dance, but young people who love to dance often start just for fun. Sometimes their dances do not turn into curing dances, but usually, once the music begins, the adults join in and the dance becomes a real one. The dances last all night oftener than not. There is a special potency in those which are danced at dawn. The /Kung dance, at irregular intervals, on an average of once in ten days, more or less. Almost invariably they dance at least once during the full moon.

Among the /Kung the women and girls always sit close together in a circle around a dance fire which may be built wherever there is convenient clear space. Their function is to clap and sing. The men dance in a line, one close behind the another, around the circle of women, in either direction, and cut through the circle past the fire. They sing as they dance. Occasionally a woman gets up and dances with them, though it is not her role, as though she could no longer resist the impulse. When a woman joins the line of dancers, the man behind her holds out his arms towards her but does not touch her. She dances with dignity, making tiny stamping steps, hardly moving, eyes cast down. If there is a delicate overtone of eroticism expressed in the dancing of the women, it is most subtle and constrained—in extreme contrast to the overt expression of many of the Bantu dances.

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The dancing of the men in the curing ceremonial dances has its own special style. In other dances, that of the *Choma*, the Men's Dance, the Eland Dance of the First Menstruation Ceremony, and in the numerous singing-dancing or rhythmic games which the /Kung play for fun, one sees enchanting pantomime and imitation of animals. In the ceremonial dances we sometimes thought we saw what might be a vestige of the imitation of animals' horns in the way the arms were held, but in comparison with the visual expressiveness of the games, the purpose is not to express by gesture but to produce sound, to be part of the music. [524]

The men wear rattles made of strings of dried cocoons with little seeds or stones inside, which make a swishing sound. These are the only instruments used in the dance. (The /Kung, incidentally, have no drums.) The men dance with knees bent and bodies carried with little motion, leaning forward. On the strong accented beat, the dancer gives a hop and comes down with both feet. On the second beat he holds his weight on one foot (alternating right and left) and with the other stamps a single step or ripples two or three light stamps into the time of the single step. The steps are very precise. They are minute in size, advancing only two or three inches, but they are strongly stamped, and ten or twenty dancers stamping together produce a loud thud. The women clap loudly and sharply. The majority of them clap the basic pattern of a particular piece, while some strike a beat or beats which are complementary to the basic beat. The clapping and stamping are of such precision that they give the effect of a well-played battery of percussion instruments producing a solid structure of intricate rhythm. Above the percussion sounds, the voices of the men and women weave together in parts, singing the medicine songs.¹ Since singing and dancing are one, producing the music, I speak of medicine songs or medicine dances interchangeably. [533]

The medicine songs or dances of the /Kung are named *Rain*, *Sun*, *Giraffe*, *Eland*, *Honey*, *Buffalo*, and *Mamba*. Some of the /Kung have *Gemsbok* and *Spider* Medicine music as well. The Rain Dance is not danced as a specific rain-making ceremony. The dances named for animals do not produce magic to control these animals in hunting or to prevent snake-bite, for example. The dances are named for these things because the things are vital, life-and-death things and they are strong, as the curing medicine in the music is strong.

After several dances have been danced the medicine men begin to cure. The /Kung do not have sorcerers, witches, or witch doctors, and do not believe that the divine beings enter into the medicine men or speak through them. Almost all the /Kung men are medicine men. They do not all choose to practise, for one reason or another, but there are always several in a band who are active. Medicine men receive no rewards other than their inner satisfactions and emotional release. I know that some of them feel a deep responsibility for the welfare of their people and great anxiety and concern if their curing fails, and a corresponding satisfaction if it prevails. Others of them appear to be less concerned about the people whom they try to cure and more inwardly turned. [535]

When the medicine men are curing, all of them experience varying degrees of self-induced trance, which includes a period of frenzy and a period of semi-

¹ Nicholas England is in the process of tracing the songs and analysing the music, and he has a paper in preparation which will include /Kung beliefs and practices about them.

13: Marshall E-5 (1952-1955) 1962 FX10 Bushmen FX10
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535 consciousness or deep unconsciousness.¹ They may become stiff or froth at the mouth
796 or lie still as if in coma. Some of them habitually remain in trance only a short time,
[756] others for hours. One man used to remain in a semi-trance for most of the day fol-
787 lowing a dance.

[753] A Bushman curing cannot be fully described in words; it must be heard and I give only an outline here. The medicine man begins by dancing and singing with the others whatever medicine song is being sung. He then leaves the line of dancing men and leans, still singing, over the person he is going to cure. He places one hand on the person's chest, one on his or her back, and flutters his hands. The /Kung believe that in this way he draws the sickness, real or potential, out of the person through his own arms into himself. He grunts with shuddering, gurgling, gasping grunts which intensify in tempo and pitch into shrieks and reach a high, piercing, quavering yell. Finally the medicine man throws up his arms to cast the sickness out, hurling it into the darkness back to //Gawwa or the //ganwari, with a sharp yelping cry of 'Kai Kai Kai'. This shows that it is heavy work to draw the sickness out. The effect of the sound on one observer, myself, was striking—gooseflesh and a stopping of the breath which made it seem as though the heart stood still an instant. A medicine man goes to every person present, leaning over each to cure, even the babies, who, amazingly, seldom cry, though he gurgles and gasps right into their ears. If someone is actually sick, he returns to him again and again through the night.

After the curing has been going on for some time, medicine men begin to reach their state of frenzy. They no longer go around to the people, their spasms of grunting and shrieking become more frequent and violent, their stomachs heave, they stagger and sway. They rush to the fire, trample it, pick up the coals, set fire to their hair. Fire activates the medicine in them. People hold them to keep them from falling and beat out the flames. They rush out into the darkness, where //Gawwa and the //ganwari are lurking. They hurl burning sticks and swear at them. 'Filthy face! Take away the sickness you have brought.' 'Uncovered penis! You are bad. You want to kill us. Go away.' 'Hishu, you are a liar. This man will not die.' At this point they may fall into deep unconsciousness or sink down semi-conscious, eyes closed, unable to walk.

The medicine men who have not reached their full frenzy or who have passed through it attend those who are in it. The /Kung believe that at such a time the medicine man's spirit leaves his body and goes out to meet //Gawwa and the //ganwari. They call this 'half death'. It is a dangerous time and the man's body must be watched over and kept warm. The medicine men lean over the one who is in trance. They

[276] ¹ The /Kung know about the drug called dagga. They told us that it grows in B.P. and that when they go to trade they sometimes get a little. They like to have some when they go hunting; it keeps one from feeling tired or discouraged, they say. They might take some at a dance if they had it, but they are not dependent on it or on any other substance to induce trance. The trances are psychologically induced.

[195] ² /Kung men swear a great deal. The swearing
578 plays always upon the themes of the genital organs, sexual intercourse, incest, and excrement. In deprec-

tion they call each other genital organs or tell each other to go and commit incest with their mothers, sisters, wives' mothers, or sons' wives. We have not recorded their saying 'daughter'. Is that thought so terrible to them that its expression is beyond even these hardened swearers? They use the same themes in their blasphemy against the gods. 'Uncovered' or 'thrown-away penis' may mean 'circumcised'. This is a great insult among the /Kung who do not circumcise but know that the Bantu do. 'Filthy face' means 'covered with excrement'.

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shriek and gurgle. They blow in his ears to open them. They take sweat from their armpits and rub him. Some fall over on to him in trance themselves and are in turn rubbed and cared for by the others. The women must sing and clap ardently while a man is in deep trance. He needs the good medicine of the music to protect him.

The curing dance draws people of a Bushman band together into concerted action as nothing else does. They stamp and clap and sing with such precision that they become like an organic being. In this close configuration—together—they face the gods. They do not plead, as they do in their individual supplications, for the favour of the divine, all-powerful beings, and do not praise them for goodness. Instead, the medicine men, on behalf of the people, releasing themselves from ordinary behaviour by trance and overcoming fear and inaction, throw themselves into combat with the gods and try to force them with hurled sticks and hurled words to take away the evils they might be bringing.

The violence and excitement of the ceremony have the effect, as in a drama, I believe, of releasing the emotions of the people and purging them, in Aristotle's sense. Fear and hostility find outlet and the people have acted together to protect themselves. In this there is solace and hope.

Résumé

LA RELIGION DES BOSCHIMANS /KUNG

Les Boschimans /Kung de la région de Nyae Nyae dans le sud-ouest de l'Afrique croient qu'il existe deux dieux — le grand créateur, qui habite dans l'est du ciel, où le soleil se lève, et le petit dieu qui est subordonné au grand dieu, et qui habite dans l'ouest du ciel où le soleil se couche.

Le grand dieu possède sept noms divins, que les /Kung ont peur de prononcer, et un seul nom humain. Certains de ces noms (d'après Schapera ce sont *Hiske*, *Haw* et *Kxo*) indiquent que le concept du grand dieu tire son origine des croyances anciennes soutenues par d'autres Boschimans et par les Hottentots. Ces noms sont associés avec un être suprême bien disposé. Divers groupes de Boschimans croyaient dans un esprit malfaisant, un 'avant-coureur de la mort', //Gawwa. D'après la croyance actuelle des /Kung de la région de Nyae Nyae, le grand dieu a fait du petit dieu son homonyme en lui accordant tous ses noms divins (mais non son nom humain), et //Gawwa est un des sept noms divins qui sont attribués aux deux dieux. Le nom humain ≠ *Gae/na*, le vieux ≠ *Gae*, est celui du protagoniste de plusieurs vieux contes bizarres, un être ayant des pouvoirs surnaturels, mais ressemblant à un homme et soumis à toutes les frustrations humaines. Les /Kung ont amalgamé l'ancien protagoniste et le grand dieu en ce qui concerne le nom, mais ils ont modifié l'image.

Le grand dieu s'est d'abord créé lui-même, et ensuite il a créé le petit dieu. Pour chacun d'eux, il a créé une épouse qui a donné naissance à des enfants. Il a créé la terre et le ciel, la femme et l'homme et il a donné des noms à toutes choses. Il a donné le nom de son épouse, *Khwova*, à la première femme, et son propre nom ≠ *Gae* au premier homme. Le grand dieu et le petit dieu s'intéressent principalement à l'humanité. Ni l'un ni l'autre n'est associé essentiellement avec le bien ou le mal à l'égard de l'homme; tous les deux peuvent apporter de grands biens, tels que la pluie, la nourriture et les enfants, mais aussi la mort, la maladie

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O gallopon,
O gallopon,
Do ye not know me?
Ye do not seem to know my hut.

Then they speak to the Rain itself:—

Thou shouldst put thy tail between thy legs,
For the women are looking shocked at thee;
Thou shouldst put thy tail between thy legs for the children.

The Rain seems here to be thought of as a magic animal ridden by spirits."

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Certain magicians have power over the Rain, and can cause it to come or stay away, as they please. These powers remain with them even after death, and just as in life they are asked for rain, so when they are dead, they may also be entreated to send it. Other magicians have a similar power over the wind, /*khw*, and are protected by it. The howling of the wind is believed to forebode evil; it tells the beasts of prey where to find people, and when it blows strongly they can approach the huts unheard. In the mythology the wind [773] is represented as having formerly been a man, which now wears the form of a bird.¹

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Among the Bushmen of Basutoland and the Orange Free State we meet again with tales about the Mantis, differing but slightly from those of the Cape. He seems, however, to have been here the object of a definite cult as well. According to Arbousset, it was believed that 'Raang (i.e. /*kaggen*) or, as he was also termed, 'Kue-'akeng-

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'teng, "the man (master) of all things," causes life and death and gives or refuses rain. All the animals have special marks which he has put upon them; deficiency of game is attributed to him, and he is invoked for success in the chase. He is also worshipped in times of famine

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and before going to war, when the *mo'koma* or "dance of blood" is performed all through the night. This dance Orpen's informant,

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Qing, described as follows: "*Cagn* (i.e. /*kaggen*)" gave us the song of this dance, and told us to dance it, and people would die from it, and he would give charms to raise them again. It is a circular dance

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of men and women, following each other, and it is danced all night. Some fall down, some become as if mad and sick, blood runs from the noses of others whose charms are weak, and they eat charm

medicine, in which is burnt snake powder.

¹ Bleek, *Bushman Texts*, 17; Lloyd, *Bushman Material Collected*, 9, 20-1; Bleek and Lloyd, *Bushman Folklore*, 195-9, 393-7 *et passim*; D. F. Bleek, *Bushman Folklore*, 307-9.

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² In some orthographies, especially that used for the Zulu-Xosa languages, the symbol *c* represents the dental click, written *ʃ* in the standard orthography for Bushman and Hottentot languages. *Cagn* is therefore merely another way of writing /*kaggen*; both represent the same sounds.

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medicine, in which is burnt snake powder. When a man is sick, this dance is danced round him, and the dancers put both hands under their arm-pits, and press their hands upon him, and when he coughs the initiated put out their hands and receive what has injured him—secret things. The initiated who know secret things are Qogne; the sick person is hang cäi." 535
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Cagn, said Qing, was the first being and made all things—the sky, the moon, stars, mountains, and animals. The Bushmen prayed to him. On being asked how, Qing answered, in a low, imploring tone: "O *Cagn*! O *Cagn*! are we not your children, do you not see our hunger? give us food"—"and he gives us (both hands full)." To the further question, where *Cagn* was, he responded, "We don't know, but the elands do. Have you not hunted and heard his cry, when the elands suddenly start and run to his call? Where he is, the elands are in droves like cattle." 776
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Cagn's wife was *Coti*. When asked where she came from, Qing said, "I don't know, perhaps with those who brought the Sun; but you are now asking the secrets that are not spoken of." These secrets he himself did not know—"only the initiated men of that dance know these things." *Cagn* also had two sons, *Cogaɿ* and *Gcwi*, and together with him and *Cogaɿ* there was another great "chief", *Qwangeiqutshaa*. All three had great power, but it was *Cagn* who gave orders through the other two. Of all these personages various tales were related by Qing. One of them, describing how *Cogaɿ* was killed by baboons and restored to life again by *Cagn*, is almost identical with the similar story told by the Cape Bushmen of */kaggen* and *!gaunu-ts'axau*. In all these tales *Cagn* appears as a human being, but with supernatural powers. He can change himself into different forms, is then sometimes killed and eaten by animals or people, but always comes to life again. He possesses various magical charms, the strongest of which is his tooth; and the birds are his messengers who report to him what is going on. Occasionally he gets into trouble, from which he is extricated by *Cogaɿ*, just as in the Cape Bushman stories */kaggen* is aided by *!ni*. [794]
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Another name for the Mantis among these Bushmen, according to Arbousset, is *'ngo*. This may explain the following quotation from Campbell: "They had a name which they gave to God, who is above them, and another to God who is under them. The former is a male, the latter a female. The male God they call Goba, the female Ko; and her attendants are called Gauna." *Ko* (*'ngo*), as

n [see category 116, p. 182 for the author's explanation of the initiated. — Analyst]

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Nama word for "master, lord", and has been used by some missionaries for "God". The Naron and Auen were vague as to the nature of /*khuba*. The old men did not know of him; the middle-aged men said *Hisha* was /*khuba*; while some of the younger people said he was the sky, others that he dwelt in the sky; they prayed to him to let them live long and to make them well when ill. Women who when young had been kidnapped and held as slaves by Nama chiefs were very fluent on the subject of /*khuba*; the others, remarks Miss Bleek, had evidently picked up the word without attaching any clear meaning to it, beyond that it was some sort of deity and that it was "good to pray to it". The same word (given by him in its vocative form /*khutse*) was also found among the partly-disorganized groups of these Bushmen by Fourie, who translates it "God".

A few of Miss Bleek's informants further mentioned *Huwu* or *Huwuba*, but they did not know much about him—he was the "captain" of the men in the north, the Makoba and others. They also said he was the brother of *Hisha*, while one man called him the "captain" of the white people.¹

Huwu or *Hu'e* figures very prominently among the Kung, however. Miss Lloyd's young informants from near Lake Ngami only once mentioned him. They began the tale of the Moon and the Hare with the words, *Huwe* made all things; and in explanation said, *Huwe* made all things to eat (i.e. all animals that are eaten), and *Huwe* is a man.² Vedder, who studied the Kung at Tsumeb, much further west, speaks of *Huwe* as a "good being", to whom the people attribute the creation and maintenance of all things. They pray to him for food, as we have already seen, at a special ceremony held once a year when the edible bulbs of the veld are beginning to ripen, and they also in case of sickness call upon him to restore them to health.³

Lebzelter, in his account of Kung religion, says that all the groups investigated by him have the belief in a "supreme good being" ("ein höchstes gutes Wesen"). Among the Eastern Kung this being is termed *Xu* (elsewhere he spells the name //*Khu*)⁴ or *Xuwa*,

¹ D. F. Bleek, *Naron*, 24-6; Fourie, "Bushmen of S.W.A.," 104.

² Quoted in D. F. Bleek, "Bushmen of Central Angola," 123.

³ "Grammatik der !Kö-Buschmannsprache," 6-7.

⁴ It may be mentioned here that Lebzelter is inconsistent in the orthography he employs: *Kui* is elsewhere written //*Khu*, //gawab alternates with /gawab, gagorab with /gau /gorab, and so on.